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FASTING

"O Muslims Fasting is prescribed for you just as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become fearful (of Allah)"

Quran 2:183

INTRODUCTION

Since Allah ﷿ created man, *Satan* has vowed to lead him astray. Thus we have the enemy who has misled millions of people and who will continue to do so at every opportunity.

Man has within himself two forces colliding all the time; the force of good and the force of evil. Man's behaviour depends upon which force has the upper hand. In the month of *Ramadhan*, Allah ﷿ blesses us with all the means to enable the force of good to supercede the evil forces. One must therefore value every moment of this month to spiritually elevate oneself.

Fasting helps us judge our strength in controlling our lust, greed and passion. It teaches us self-discipline so that we gain control over the factors which Satan uses as his tools against Man. Fasting is a weapon and just as any other weapon is useless, unless the user knows how to use it, same applies to Fasting. This book has been written with the aim of teaching *Muslims* how they can use the weapon of Fasting in a manner that is correct and beneficial in their war against *Satan*, thereby attaining the pleasure of Allah ﷿.

Fasting has been ordained during *Ramadhan* (the 9th lunar month). The name of this month is derived from many sources. It is worth mentioning one which is recorded in a *Hadith* wherein it is related from Rasulullah ﷺ that *"Most certainly it (Ramadhan) burns ones sins."*

Allah ﷿ has blessed us with the month of *Ramadhan* wherein the rebellious *Shayatin* are chained and one abstains from food and drink which grants one the maximum opportunity to discipline and control the *Nafs*.

Due to the mercy of Allah ﷾ in *Ramadhan*, the mosques are full, charity increases, ties of brotherhood strengthen, angers and tempers subside, and an atmosphere of peace prevails. Let us monitor the gradual regression after *Eid salaah* so that we may stop it in time. Psychologists agree that habits which one wishes to remove, will decrease when monitored consciously. When the dazzling temporal world envelops us, we lose concern for the *Akhirah* and that which took thirty days to achieve can be lost in minutes. We should therefore firmly resolve to be steadfast on the good habits acquired during this holy month.

MAY ALLAH ﷾ ACCEPT THIS HUMBLE WORK.

THE BLESSED MONTH OF RAMADHAN

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا
كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ

YĀ AYYUHAL-LADHĪNA ĀMANŪ KUTIBA `ALAYKUMUṢ-ṢIYĀMU KAMĀ KUTIBA `ALAL-LADHĪNA MIN QABLIKUM LA`ALLAKUM TATTAQŪN

"O Muslims' fasting is prescribed for you just as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become fearful."

Al Baqarah 183

Before proceeding with the *masa'il* (rules) related to *Ramadhan*, it is best to narrate some of the *fadha'il (excellences and virtues)* of *Ramadhan*.

Knowledge of the virtues will develop the understanding of the value and importance of this most blessed month, creating enthusiasm and

eagerness, which in turn will result, *Insha-Allah*, in proper fulfillment of the laws, etiquette and demands of *Ramadhan*.

Abu Saeed Khudri ﵁ narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ said :
"The Doors of the Heavens are opened up on the first night of Ramadhan. Not a single door (among the doors of Heaven) is then closed until the last night of Ramadhan.

For every salaah performed (this refers to Tarawih salaah) during the nights of Ramadhan, Allah ﷻ records one and a half thousand good deeds for every Sajdah (of that salaah). In addition, for the fasting person Allah ﷻ creates in Jannah a palace of red Ya'qut (a precious stone of Jannah). This palace will have seven thousand entrances (so huge will be the entrances) in each entrance will be a mansion of gold adorned with red Ya'qut.

When a Muslim fasts the first day of Ramadhan, Allah ﷻ forgives all his sins committed from the first day of the previous Ramadhan. Daily (during Ramadhan) from the time of Fajr salaah until sunset, seventy thousand Mala'ikah (Angels) supplicate for their forgiveness.

In return for every Sajdah which the fasting person makes of any salaah, whether during the day or night, they will obtain (such a wonderful) massive tree that a horseman will take five hundred years to pass under its shade."

O people there comes upon you a great month, a most blessed month, in which lies a night greater in reward than one thousand months. Allah ﷻ has made compulsory fasting in this month and has decreed wakefulness at night *(Tarawih salaah) sunnah*.

Whosoever tries drawing nearer to Allah ﷻ by performing any *Nafl* (optional) deed in this month, for him shall be such a reward, as if he

had performed a Fardh (compulsory) deed any other time of the year.

Moreover, whomsoever performs a *Fardh*, for him shall be the reward of seventy *Faraidh,* in any other time of the year.

This is indeed the month of patience, and the reward for true patience is *Jannah*; it is the month of sympathy with one's fellow people; it is the month wherein a true believer's *rizq* (provision) is increased.

Those who want to please their Lord, should in great quantity recite the *Kalimah Tayyibah*: ***'LA ILAHA ILLALLAH'***, and make plenty ***'ISTIGHFAR'*** (beg Allah's ﷻ forgiveness). As for those, without which you cannot make do, you should beg Allah ﷻ for entry into *Jannah* and seek refuge with Him from the fire of *Jahannam*.

When the month of *Ramadhan* begins, the doors of *Jannah* are opened and the doors of *Jahannam* are closed and the *Shayatin* are chained up.

Fasting helps us to judge our strength in controlling our lust, greed and passion. It teaches us self discipline so that we gain control over the factors which *Satan* uses as his tools against mankind. Fasting is a weapon and just as any other weapon is useless, unless the user knows how to use it, the same is with fasting. This book has been written with the aim of teaching Muslims how they can use the weapon of Fasting in a manner that is correct and beneficial in their war against *Satan*, thereby attaining the pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

Even scientists agree that mankind require a rest period due to 'mental fatigue'. Allah ﷻ, The All Knowing, The Wise, Our Creator, created us and knows that we are bodily weak, and spiritually feeble, in need of occasions to boost and recharge our weak *Iman* so that we may adhere to the commands of Allah ﷻ in the way shown to us by our beloved Prophet Rasulullah ﷺ.

SUHUR (SEHRI)

Verily, Allah ﷾ and His angels send mercy upon those who eat *Suhur*. Eat *Suhur* because in *Suhur* there is *barakah*.

DAYS OF RAMADHAN

The fish in the sea seek forgiveness for those fasting until they break their fast. Allah ﷾ decorates *Jannah* every day and then says, *"The time is near when my pious servants shall cast aside the great trials and come to me."* During each day and night of *Ramadhan*, Allah ﷾ sets free a great number of souls from hell. In addition, for every *Muslim*, during each day and night, at least one *du'a* is certainly accepted.

Insha Allah

SAUM (FASTING)

Saum is a shield, as long as the fasting person does not tear it up.

Note: Fasting is a protection from *Shaytan* and from Allah's ﷾ punishment in the Hereafter. However, one who indulges in sins; such as lying, backbiting etc., whilst fasting; these sins then become the cause of the fast becoming wasted. Fasting is a shield and a powerful fortress. All good deeds are for the one who renders them, but fasting is exclusively for Allah ﷾. I swear by that being in whose possession is the life of Muhammad ﷺ! The odour of the mouth of a fasting person is sweeter to Allah ﷾ than the fragrance of musk. Fasting is exclusively for Allah ﷾, the reward of it (being limitless) no one knows besides Allah ﷾.

Mishkat

IFTAAR

Whosoever gives something to a fasting person in order to break the

fast, for them there shall be forgiveness for their sins and emancipation from the fire of *Jahannam*, and for him (the one who gives) shall be the same reward as for them (whom they fed), without that persons (the one who was fed) reward being diminished in the least. Whoever gave a person who fasted water to drink, Allah ﷿ shall give them a drink from His fountain on the day of Judgement, where after they shall never again feel thirsty until they enter *Jannah*. The fasting person experiences two occasions of delight; at the time of *Iftar* and at the time they meet their *Rabb*.

Prayer made by a fasting person at the time of breaking fast is accepted.

NIGHTS OF RAMADHAN

Whoever stands in prayer and worship in the nights of *Ramadhan*, with *Iman* and with sincere hope of gaining reward, all his previous sins will be forgiven. Allah ﷿ has ordained fasting in *Ramadhan* compulsory, and I have decreed (by the command of Allah ﷿) wakefulness at night (*tarawih*, etc.) *Sunnah*. Whomsoever, in the state of *Iman* and with hope of gaining reward, fasts in *Ramadhan* and stays awake at night emerges from sin, purified as the day when their mother gave birth to them.

For every *salaah* performed during the nights of *Ramadhan*, Allah ﷿ records one and a half thousand good deeds for every *Sajdah*.

LAYLATUL QADR *(NIGHT OF POWER)*

Whoever stands in prayer in the night of power with *Iman* and with sincere hope of gaining reward all his previous sins are forgiven. Look for the night of power amongst the odd numbered nights of the last ten days of *Ramadhan*.

One aim of this book is to briefly guide those who wish to learn and also to answer common queries. It is also hoped that the misrepresentations and incorrect beliefs regarding this beautiful gift of fasting from Allah ﷻ are cleared.

SIGHTING OF THE MOON (HILAL)

1. The usual principle on which the determination of the Islamic months are based, has always been the sighting of the moon. (Ru'ya)
2. It is possible to prepare correct timetables showing sunset, Sunrise, *Zawaal* and *salaah* times, but it is not possible to prepare timetables for the sighting of the moon. The timetable is unable to provide the human act of sighting the moon essential for the commencement of the Islamic month.
3. The 'Birth' of the moon or assumed feasibility of sighting the moon are not the principles for determining the Islamic months.
4. If the moon is not sighted due to poor weather conditions, Rasulullah ﷺ, commanded that the month be completed with thirty days. This has been the practice of the Ummah for the past years since Rasulullah ﷺ.

DU`A WHEN SIGHTING THE NEW MOON

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَهِلَّهٗ عَلَيْنَا بِالْاَمْنِ وَالْاِيْمَانِ وَالسَّلَامَةِ وَالْاِسْلَامِ
وَالتَّوْفِيْقِ لِمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضٰى رَبِّيْ وَرَبُّكَ اللّٰهُ

ALLĀHUMMA 'AHILLAHŪ `ALAYNĀ BIL'AMNI
WAL-ĪMĀN. WAS-SALĀMATI WAL ISLĀM.
WATTAWFĪQI LIMĀ TUḤIBBU WA TARḌĀ.
RABBĪ WA RABBUKAL-LĀH.

O Allah! Let the crescent moon appear over us with security and Iman; with peace and Islam; and with ability for us to practice such actions which You love. (O' Moon!) My Creator and Your Creator is Allah.

SOME RULES PERTAINING TO THE MOON

1. It is incumbent on Muslims to search for the moon of *Ramadhan* on the end of the 29th of *Sha'ban*.
2. The testimony of a *fasiq* (flagrant transgressor) regarding the sighting of the moon is not acceptable.
3. The testimony of a person (whose personal condition is not known) is acceptable according to Imam Abu Hanifah (R.A.).
4. If someone sees the moon of *Ramadhan* alone, but for some reason his testimony was rejected, he will have to fast on that day. If he does not, he will have to observe *Qadha* of the fast. However, there is no *Kaffarah* on him in this case, if he completes thirty days for *Ramadhan* and the moon for *Eid* was not sighted, he will have to continue fasting with the people even if it means that he fasts for thirty one days.
5. The moon for *Sha'ban* was sighted. The month of Rajab was completed with thirty days and *Ramadhan* was commenced without the moon of *Ramadhan* being sighted. At the end of 28th day of *Ramadhan* the moon or Shawwal was sighted. In this case the people have to make *Qadha* of one fast.
6. The moon for Sha'ban was not sighted. However, the month was completed with thirty days and *Ramadhan* was commenced without the moon of *Ramadhan* being sighted so Sha`ban was also 30 days. At the end of the 28th day of fasting the moon for Shawwal was sighted. In this case two fasts have to be made *Qadha*.
7. One should not take offence if one's report of sighting of the moon is not accepted by the scholars. Non-acceptance of information

regarding the sighting of the moon is not always because of the reporters being a *fasiq* or unreliable. At times the sighting of a single person or even of a few persons is not acceptable to the *Shariah*. Thus, rejection of testimony is based on *Shari* grounds.

8. If the sky is not clear and thirty days of *Ramadhan* have passed then in declaring *Eid-ul-Fitr* there is no difference of opinion even if one person testified for the commencement of *Ramadhan*.
9. There is no validity in seeing the moon in the day, whether it be before or after *Zawaal* the moon that will be regarded as the moon of the coming night can only be seen at night.

SAUM (FASTING)

1. Fasting in the month of *Ramadhan* is one of the five pillars of *Islam*.
2. Fasting in the month of *Ramadhan* is *FARDH* upon every Muslim, male and female who is sane and mature.
3. Almighty Allah ﷻ has promised great reward for those that fast, whilst severe punishment for those that do NOT fast in the month of *Ramadhan.*
4. Fasting has many physical, moral and social benefits. However, Allah ﷻ has made fasting compulsory so that we become pious, Allah ﷻ fearing and Allah ﷻ conscious.
5. Fasting in *ISLAM* means to stay away from EATING, DRINKING and COHABITATION (sex) from *Subhus Sadiq* (true dawn) to sunset with a *Niyyah* (intention) of *Sawm* (fasting).

THE NIYYAH (INTENTION)

1. The *Niyyah* of fasting is NECESSARY. If a person stays away from all those things that invalidate one's fast without a *Niyyah*, the fast will NOT be valid.
2. It is not necessary to express the *Niyyah* verbally as *Niyyah* means

to intend. Thus, the intention at heart will suffice. However, it is better to express the Niyyah verbally also.

3. The time for *Niyyah* lasts upto midday for *Fardh Mu'ayyan*, *Wajib Mu'ayyan, Sunnah* or *Mustahab* fasts. The hours of a day are from Subh Sadiq to sunset.
4. The *Niyyah* for *Fardh Ghair Mu'ayyan* and *Wajib Ghair Mu'ayyan* should be made before *Subh Sadiq*.

SUHUR (SEHRI)

It is *Masnun* (*Sunnah*) to partake of *Suhur* during the last portion of the night. It is a means of attaining great blessings and *Thawab*. The *Sunnah* will be attained if one partakes of *Suhur* at any time after midnight. But it is better and desirable to partake of *Suhur* in the last portion of the night. If the Mu'adhdhin has called out the *Adhan* before its time, it will not be prohibited to partake of *Suhur* till just before *Subh Sadiq* appears. It will suffice if one makes an intention to fast in ones mind after the *Suhur*. Delaying *Suhur* to such an extent that there is fear of the appearance of *Subh Sadiq*, should be avoided. To partake of *Suhur* at its correct time and then spend time chewing or smoking till the last minute should be avoided.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUHUR

A person partaking in *Suhur* during the middle of the night (i.e. before the time of *Suhur*) deprives himself of the complete *Thawab* of *Suhur* through this action.

Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said: *"Verily, Allah and His Malaikah send mercy upon those who eat Suhur"*.

Many *Ulama* agree that to partake of *Suhur* is *Mustahab* and many people are deprived of this reward because of laziness (i.e. not getting up from one's sleep to perform this Sunnah).

Another *Hadith* indicates that the difference between our fasting and that of the *Ahlul-Kitab* (Jews and Christians) lies in partaking of *Suhur*.

The following are blessings of *Suhur*:

a) In it, the *Sunnah* if followed
b) Through it, we oppose the ways of *Ahlul-Kitab*, which we are at all times called upon to do.
c) It provides strength for *Ibadah*.
d) It promotes more sincerity in *Ibadah*.
e) It aids in the elimination of bad temper
f) *Suhur* is a time when prayers are accepted.
g) It gives one the opportunity to remember Allah ﷻ, make *dhikr* and Lift up the hands to him in *du`a*.

The following intention for the Fast has to be expressed during the night.

DU'A AT THE TIME OF SEHRI

وَبِصَوْمِ غَدٍ نَوَيْتُ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

WA BI ṢAWMI GHADIN NAWAYTU MIN SHAHRI-RAMAḌĀN

"I have the intention to observe tomorrow a Fast of the month of Ramadhan."

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَصُوْمُ لَكَ فَاغْفِرْلِيْ مَا قَدَّمْتُ وَمَا اَخَّرْتُ

ALLĀHUMMA AṢŪMU LAKA FAGHFIRLĪ
MĀ QADDAMTU WAMĀ AKH-KHARTU

"O Allah, I keep fast for You, so forgive my future and past sins."

IFTAAR

Sahl Bin Sa'd ؓ reported that Rasulullah ﷺ said: *"People will remain prosperous as long as they hasten with Iftaar" (i.e. they break their fast immediately when the time for Iftaar enters).*

It is *Sunnah* to make *Iftaar* (to break one's fast) immediately after sunset. One should not delay in *Iftaar*. It is indeed harmful if one partakes in the *Iftaar* meal for so long, that he misses his *Maghrib salaah*. It is better to break the fast in the Masjid, so that the *Maghrib salaah* is not missed. To perform *Maghrib salaah* at home, so that one can indulge in the provisions of *Iftaar* while missing the blessings of *salaah* with *Jama'ah*, is a shameful act.

DU'A AT THE TIME OF IFTAAR

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ اٰمَنْتُ وَعَلٰى رِزْقِكَ اَفْطَرْتُ

ALLĀHUMMA INNĪ LAKA ṢUMTU WABIKA ĀMANTU
WA `ALĀ RIZQIKA AFṬARTU.

"O Allah for You have I fasted, in You do I believe, and on You do I rely and now I break this fast with food coming from You."

TYPES OF FASTS

There are Eight types of *Fasts* . They are as follows:

1. **FARDH MU-'AYYAN:** Fasting for the whole month of *Ramadhan* once a year.

2. **FARDH GHAIR MU-'AYYAN:** The duty upon one to keep *QADHA*

of a fast missed in the month of *Ramadhan* with or without a valid reason.

3. **WAJIB MU-'AYYAN:** To vow to keep a fast on a specific day or date for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, upon the fulfilment of some wish or desire

4. **WAJIB GHAIR MU-'AYYAN:** To vow or pledge to keep a fast without fixing any day or date, upon the fulfilment of a wish. Those fasts which are kept for breaking one's *Qasm* (oath) also fall under this category.

5. **SUNNAH:** Those fasts which Rasulullah ﷺ kept and encouraged others to keep, e.g., fasting on the 9th and 10th of Muharram, and the 9th of Dhil Hijjah, etc.

6. **MUSTAHAB:** All fasts besides *Fardh, wajib* and *Sunnah* are *Mustahab*, eg., fasting on Mondays and Thursdays.

7. **MAKRUH:** Fasting ONLY on the 9th or 10th of Muharram or Fasting ONLY on Saturdays.

8. **HARAM:** It is *Haram* to fast on FIVE days during the year. They are *Eidul Fitr, Eidul Adhaa* and three days after *Eidul Adha*.

THINGS MAKRUH WHILE FASTING

1. To chew rubber, plastic or other inedible items.
2. To taste any article of food or drink and spit it out. If a woman has a very ill-tempered husband, it is permissible for her to taste the food, provided it does not go down her throat.
3. To collect one's saliva in the mouth and then to swallow it, trying to quench thirst.

4. To delay a bath that has become *Fardh* knowingly until after *Subh Sadiq*.
5. To use paste or tooth powder to clean one's teeth. It is permitted to use a *miswaak* of any fresh branch or root.
6. To complain of hunger and thirst.
7. To take excessive water up the nostrils when cleaning the nose.
8. To gargle more than necessary.
9. To quarrel, argue, use filthy or indecent words.
10. To backbite, lie and swear etc. are sinful acts even when one is not fasting. Therefore they become more serious when fasting.

THINGS THAT BREAK ONE'S FAST

1. Things that break one's fast are of two kinds. Some only make *Qadha* necessary, whilst others make both *Qadha* and *Kaffarah* compulsory.

   (***a***) **QADHA**: To keep one fast in place of one that breaks, or is broken unintentionally.
   (***b***) **KAFARAH:** To keep SIXTY fasts ***continuously*** **.** This is atonement for fasts broken intentionally.

- However, if a person is unable to keep these 60 fasts, for some valid reason, eg., continuous sickness, then one has the option of choosing from one of the following four:

1. Feed sixty poor people to their fill for two meals, or
2. Feed one poor person two meals a day, for sixty days; or
3. Give 60 poor persons 3.5 lbs. (approx. 1.6 kg.) of wheat or its value in cash or food;
4. Give to one poor person not less than 3.5 lbs,. of wheat, rice or food grains, etc. or its value in cash **for sixty days.** (It cannot be given at once)

THINGS THAT INVALIDATE ONE'S FAST BUT MAKE ONLY QADHA WAJIB

1. Anything put by force into the mouth of, and is swallowed by a fasting person.
2. Water going down the throat whilst gargling, (whilst being conscious of one's fast).
3. To vomit a mouthful intentionally or to return vomit down the throat.
4. Swallowing intentionally a pebble, piece of paper or any item that is not used as food or medicine.
5. Swallowing something edible, equal to or bigger than a grain of gram which was stuck between the teeth. However, if it is first taken out of the mouth and swallowed, it will break the fast whether it is smaller or bigger than the size of a grain.
6. Putting oil into the ear.
7. Inhaling snuff into the nostrils.
8. Swallowing the blood from the gums if the colour of the blood is more than the saliva with which it is mixed.
9. To eat and drink forgetting that one is fasting and thereafterthinking that the fast is broken, to eat and drink again.
10. To eat and drink after Subha Sadiq or to break the fast beforesunset due to a cloudy sky or a faulty watch, etc., and then realising one's fault.

NOTE: *Any fast other than the fast of Ramadhan, whether broken intentionally or with a good valid reason, makes* ***only Qadha wajib.*** *There is no Kaffarah for breaking any fast besides that of Ramadhan.*

THINGS THAT MAKE BOTH QADHA AND KAFFARAH WAJIB

1. Eating, drinking, cohabiting or breaking the fast in any other

manner, e.g. smoking, etc., without a valid reason, will make both Qadha and Kaffarah necessary.
2. Applying Surma into the eye or rubbing oil on the head and then, thinking that the fast is broken, to eat and drink intentionally.
3. To drink any kind of medicine intentionally.

THINGS THAT DO NOT BREAK THE FAST

1. To eat or drink something unintentionally.
2. A mosquito, fly or any other object going down the throat unintentionally.
3. Water entering the ears.
4. Dust or dirt going down the throat.
5. Swallowing one's OWN saliva.
6. Taking an injection.
7. Applying of *Surma* into the eyes.
8. Taking a bath to keep cool.
9. Rubbing oil onto the body or hair.
10. To vomit unintentionally.
11. Applying perfume. It is NOT permitted to inhale the smoke of *Loban* or incense sticks whilst fasting. It is also NOT permitted to smoke cigarettes or inhale its smoke.
12. Brushing the teeth without tooth paste or powder, e.g. using a *Miswaak*, etc.
13. A dream which makes *Ghusl* necessary does not break the fast.
14. Swallowing something edible less than a grain in size that was stick between the teeth.

PEOPLE EXEMPTED FROM FASTING

1. Sick people when their health is likely to be affected by fasting. They should make up the loss, a fast for a fast, when they recover after *Ramadhan*.

2. A *Musafir*, (one who is undertaking a journey of more than 77km (48 miles) and does NOT intend staying more than 14 days at his destination). However, it is better for him to fast in *Ramadhan* than keep *Qadha* later, provided the journey is not a tiresome one.
3. If it is feared that hunger or thirst will lead to death, it is permitted to break one's fast.
4. It is necessary to keep *Qadha* of a *nafl* fast which was broken before completing it.

FIDYAH*(COMPENSATION)* FOR FAST

1. A very old person who does not have the strength to fast or a very sickly or diseased person who has no hope of recovering after *Ramadhan*, should give *fidyah* for each fast missed in *Ramadhan.*
2. The *Fidyah* for a fast is similar to that of a missed *Fardh* or *wajib salaah*, i.e.
   i) To give 3.5lbs = approx. 1.6 kg of wheat
   Or .... 7lbs = approx. 3.2 kg of barley.
   ii) Or .... the equivalent of the above in cash or kind.
   If, however, an old or sick person gains strength or recovers after *Ramadhan*, he must keep the missed number of fasts and whatever was given as *Fidyah* will be a reward for him from Allah ﷻ.

No one is allowed to fast for another sick or fit person.

NOTE: *Children should be encouraged to fast, but should not be forced to complete the fast up to sunset if they are unable to bear the hunger or thirst*.

TARAWIH

Once Rasulullah ﷺ addressed his followers on the last day of *Sha'ban*,

on the eve of *Ramadhan*, and said: *"There is a night in this month which is greater in excellence than a thousand months; Allah ﷿ has enjoined an extra prayer to be offered in the nights of this month. If a person performs a voluntary good act out of his own free choice during this month, they will be entitled to receive the reward of an imperative act performed in the other months"*.

In another tradition, he has regarded the Tarawih Prayer as a means of the forgiveness of sins. He has said: "The one who observes the Tarawih Prayer at night during Ramadhan with complete faith and devotion only for the sake of the recompense of the Akhirah (Hereafter), will have all his previous sins forgiven by Allah ﷿".

- *Tarawih salaah* is *SUNNAT MU-AKKADAH* for both men and women.
- To perform *Tarawih* with *jama'ah* is *sunnat-kifayah* for men.
- If a person performs *Tarawih* at home whilst *Tarawih* is being performed at the Masjid, he will not be sinful. However, if all the neighbours perform their *Tarawih* alone at home, then all will be sinful because of neglecting the *jama'ah*.
- The time for *Tarawih* is from after *Isha salaah* to a little before *Subhus-Sadiq*. It can be performed either before or after the *Witr salaah*.
- If one has missed a few rak'ah of *Tarawih* and the *Imam* has commenced the *Witr*, then this *Muqtadi* may join for the *Witr* and complete the remainder of his *Tarawih* thereafter.
- 20 *raka'at* with 10 Salaam are *masnun*, one should have a *niyyah* for 2 *raka'at* of *Tarawih* each time. After every 4 *raka'at* it is *Mustahab* to sit a while and take a rest.
- One may remain silent or recite the *Qur'an* or *tasbih* in a low voice or say *Nafl salaah* separately during the period of rest after every 4 *raka'at*.
- It is *makruh* to perform *Tarawih* sitting if one has the strength of qiyam (standing).

- While performing *Tarawih* some people do not join the *Jama'ah* from the beginning but join the *Imam* when he prepares to go into *Ruku'*. This is *makruh*. They should join at the beginning.
- If one does not get the *Jamaa'ah* for Fardh of Eisha, he should perform his Fardh alone and then join the *Jamaa'ah* for *Tarawih*.

WHAT SHOULD BE RECITED DURING THE PAUSE

The worshiper has the option to be quiet during the pause after each 4 *raka'at*, or recite some *Tasbih*, or offer a voluntary prayer. The people of *Makkah*, as mentioned above, used to perform a *tawaf* of the *Ka'bah*, and the people of *Madinah* offered 4 *raka'at* of *Nafl*. Some jurists, however, have recommended that the following *Tasbih* be recited in the pause although it does not hold the rank of *Sunnah*:

سُبْحَانَ ذِي الْمُلْكِ وَالْمَلَكُوْتِ سُبْحَانَ ذِي الْعِزَّةِ
وَالْعَظْمَةِ وَالْهَيْبَةِ وَالْقُدْرَةِ وَالْكِبْرِيَاءِ وَالْجَبَرُوْتِ
سُبْحَانَ الْمَلِكِ الْحَيِّ الَّذِيْ لَايَنَامُ وَلَا يَمُوْتُ
سُبُّوْحٌ قُدُّوْسٌ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوْحِ
اَللّٰهُمَّ اَجِرْنَا مِنَ النَّارِ يَا مُجِيْرُ يَا مُجِيْرُ يَا مُجِيْرُ

SUBḤĀNA DHIL MULKI WAL MALAKŪT.
SUBḤĀNA DHIL `IZZATI WAL `AŻMATI WAL HAYBATI
WAL QUDRATI WAL KIBRIYĀ'I WAL JABARŪT.
SUBḤĀNAL MALIKIL ḤAYYIL LADHĪ

LĀ YANĀMU WA LĀ YAMŪT.
SUBBŪḤUN QUDDŪSUN RABBUNĀ WA
RABBUL-MALĀ'IKATI WARRŪḤ.
ALLĀHUMMA AJIRNĀ MINAN NĀR.
YĀ MUJĪRU YĀ MUJĪRU YĀ MUJĪR.

"Glorified is the Owner of the Kingdom of the earth and the heavens. Glorified is the Possessor of Honour and Magnificence and Awe. Glorified is the Possessor of Honour and Magnificence and Awe, and Power and Greatness and Omnipotence. Glorified is the Sovereign, the Living, Who neither sleeps nor dies. He is the most praised and the most Holy, our Lord, the Lord of the Angels and the Spirit (Gabriel). O Allah protect us from the fire of hell; O Protector, O Protector, O Protector.

I'TIKAF

I'tikaf to enter the Masjid with the intention of residing therein. *Mu'takif* - One who makes *I'tikaf*.

The basic purpose of *I'tikaf* is that the heart gets attached to Allah ﷻ and, with it, one attains inner composure and equanimity, and pre-occupation with the mundane things of life ceases, and absorption in the eternal reality takes its place. And the state is reached in which all fears, hopes and apprehensions are superseded by the love and remembrance of Allah ﷻ.

Rasulullah ﷺ always observed *I'tikaf* and the Muslims have on a whole adhered to it. It has become a regular feature of the month of *Ramadhan* and a confirmed practice with the devout and the faithful. Ayesha رضي الله عنها relates that *"Rasulullah ﷺ regularly observed I'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadhan till the end of his life. After him, his wives maintained the tradition"*.

TYPES OF I'TIKAF: WAJIB, SUNNAH & MUSTAHAB

1. **WAJIB:** To vow or pledge to make *I'tikaf* (on a fixed day) for the sake of Allah ﷻ upon the fulfilment of some wish or desire, the least duration of a *wajib I'tikaf* is one day and night and it must be accompanied by a fast.

2. **SUNNAT-MUAKKADAH:** To reside the last ten nights and days of *Ramadhan* in the Masjid is *Sunnat-Muakkadah 'alal Kifayah*, i.e. If a person from the community fulfils the obligation of *I'tikaf,* the entire community will be absolved of this sacred duty. Otherwise all the residents will be sinful of neglecting this *Sunnah* of our Nabi ﷺ.

3. **MUSTAHAB OR NAFL:** This I'tikaf can be for any amount of time, even for a few minutes.

N.B. *Fasting is not conditional for Mustahab or Nafl I'tikaf.*

NIYYAH FOR SUNNAH I'TIKAF

بِسْمِ اللهِ دَخَلْتُ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَنَوَيْتُ سُنَّةَ الْاِعْتِكَافِ

BISMILLĀHI DAKHALTU WA `ALAYHI TAWAKKALTU WANAWAYTU SUNNATAL I`TIKĀF

In the name of Allah, I enter the (mosque) and only upon Him (Allah) do I rely I am making the Intention of Sunnatul I'tikaf.

NIYYAH FOR NAFL I'TIKAF

نَوَيْتُ الْاِعْتِكَافَ مَا دُمْتُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ

NAWAYTUL I`TIKĀFA MĀ DUMTU FĪL MASJID

I intend making I'tikaf for Allah, the High, the Glorious, as long as I remain in the Masjid.

CONDITIONS OF I'TIKAF:

1. Niyyah: Intention.
2. Taharah: To be free from Hadathul Akbar for entry and all hadath for acquisition of reward.
3. Sanity: *i.e. a person should not be mad.*

THINGS PERMITTED DURING I'TIKAF:

1. Eating.
2. Sleeping.
3. Discussing matters of Deen or necessary talk.

NOTE: *It is Makruh to observe complete silence as a form of Worship this does not however permit worldly talk.*

ONE IS PERMITTED TO LEAVE THE MASJID:

1. For wajib ghusl.
2. For wudhu.
3. To answer the call of nature (toilet).

NOTE: Leaving the Masjid without a *Shar'i* reason will nullify the *I'tikaf*.

THINGS TO DO DURING I'TIKAF:

A *Mu'takif* should engage himself in the following:

1. *Ibadah* (any form).
2. Recital of the Holy *Qur'an*.

3. *Nafl Salaah* and *dhikr*.
4. *Salawat (Durud)* and *Istighfar*.
5. Remembrance of Allah سبحانه وتعالى.
6. Learn or teach the knowledge of *Deen*.

I'TIKAF FOR WOMEN

Ladies may also perform *I'tikaf* by designating a portion of their house; wherein they normally pray *salaah*. This is not a *Shar'i* Masjid, none of the rulings applicable to Masjid's apply.

The purpose behind this designation is merely for *I'tikaf* purposes for the ladies. Any lady is at liberty to perform *I'tikaf* for the last ten days of *Ramadhan* in this specific room and thereby acquire the same reward as the menfolk in the Masjid.

Ladies should remember, that for them to perform this *I'tikaf* of the last ten days of *Ramadhan*; purity (from *Haydh*) is essential. It should also be noted that for *I'tikaf* of the last ten days of *Ramadhan*, ladies will not be able to undertake household duties. These domestic chores will be performed by daughters under her supervision while in *I'tikaf*.

REWARD OF I'TIKAF

Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه narrates Rasulullah ﷺ related *'Whomsoever performs I'tikaf for a day: Allah* سبحانه وتعالى *will spread three trenches between him (or her) and the fire of hell. The width of each trench being greater than the distance between the Heaven and earth.'*

In addition: to perform *I'tikaf* of the last ten days of *Ramadhan* is equivalent to the reward of two Hajj and two Umrah!

LAYLATUL QADR - *NIGHT OF POWER*

إِنَّآ أَنْزَلْنٰهُ فِيْ لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ○ وَمَآ أَدْرٰىكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ○
لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ○ تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَالرُّوْحُ فِيْهَا
بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ○ سَلٰمٌ هِيَ حَتّٰى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ○

INNĀ ANZALNĀHU FĪ LAYLATIL QADR.
WA MĀ ADRĀKA MĀ LAYLATUL QADR?
LAYLATUL QADRI KHAYRUM MIN ALFI SHAHR.
TANAZZALUL MALĀ `IKATU WAR RŪḤU FĪHĀ
BI 'IDHNI RABBIHIM MIN KULLI AMR.
SALĀMUN HIYA ḤATTĀ MAṬLA`IL FAJR.

Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'an) down in the night of Al-Qadr (Decree) And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is? The night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshiping Allah in that night is better than worshiping Him a thousand months, i.e. 83 years and 4 months). Therein descend the angels and the Ruh (Jibril (Gabriel)) by Allah's Permission with all Decrees, (All that night), there is Peace (and Goodness from Allah to His believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn.

Amongst the nights of *Ramadhan*, there is one called '*Laylatul Qadr*', a night that is noted for its great blessings. The *Qur'an* describes it as being greater in blessings and spiritual virtue than a thousand months, which in turn means that it is more valuable than eighty three years and four months. Fortunate indeed is that person who attains the full

blessings of this night by spending it in the worship of Allah, because he has then attained the reward of "*Ibadah*" for eighty three years, four months and even more. Indeed the granting of this night for the faithful Muslims is a great favour.

THE ORIGIN

Regarding this night, in a *Hadith* reported by Anas رضي الله عنه in *ad-durrul Manthur*, Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said: *"Laylatul Qadr was granted to this Ummah and not to any other Ummah before this"*. As regards the reason for the granting of Laylatul Qadr, various views are held.

According to some *Ahadith*, one reason is given thus: Rasulullah ﷺ used to ponder over the longer lives of the people of the past ages and when comparing them with much shorter lives of this *Ummah*, he became greatly saddened, because if his *Ummah* wished to compete with the people before them, then because of their shorter lives, it would be impossible for them to either emulate or surpass the previous *Ummah* in the doing of righteous deeds. Therefore, Allah سبحانه وتعالى in His Infinite Mercy granted this night of great blessings. This means that, if any fortunate person of this *Ummah* during his life-time spends ten such nights in the worship of his creator, he would have gained the reward of *Ibadah* for more than eight hundred and thirty three years.

Another report states that Rasulullah ﷺ once related to the '*Sahabah*' the story of a very righteous man from among the *Banu Isra'il*, who spent one thousand months in *Jihad*'. On hearing this the *Sahabah* enviously felt that they could not attain the same reward, whereupon Allah سبحانه وتعالى granted them this night of Power.

Another report states that our Nabi ﷺ once mentioned the names of the four most pious people from the *Banu Isra'il*, each of whom spent

eighty years in Allah's سبحانه وتعالى sincere service, worshiping Him and not transgressing in the least. They were Prophet Ayyub عليه السلام, Zakariyya عليه السلام, Ezkeel عليه السلام and Yu'sha عليه السلام. The Sahaba heard this, wondering how to emulate their achievements. Then Jibra'il عليه السلام appeared and recited *"Surah Al Qadr"*, wherein the blessings of this particular night were revealed.

There are reports too, explaining the origin of the night of Power, but no matter which of these are accepted, the important fact remains that Allah سبحانه وتعالى has granted us this night as a great favour and how fortunate are those who have never missed worship in this night. As to which particular night it is, here again, approximately fifty different views are reported. It is not easy to enumerate them all but the most generally accepted versions, shall follow in the ensuing pages of this chapter. Because the *Qur'an* itself mentions the night, we shall commence with a short commentary of *Suratul Qadr'*.

اِنَّا اَنْزَلْنٰهُ فِيْ لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ

INNĀ ANZALNĀHU FĪ LAYLATIL QADR

"We have indeed revealed this (message) in the night of Power"

Reference here is made to the fact that, on this specific night, the *Qur'an* was sent down from the *'Lowhul Mahfuz'* (the preserved Tablet) to the heavens. The mere fact that the *Qur'an* was revealed on this night would have been sufficient to ensure its greatness. But apart from this fact, it is also noted for many other things. In the very next verse, a question is asked:

وَمَا اَدْرٰىكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ

WA MĀ ADRĀKA MĀ LAYLATUL QADR?

"And what will explain to you what the Night of Power is?"

In other words, the question asked here is: Have you any knowledge as to the greatness and importance of the night? Have you any knowledge as to the great favours and bounties that go with it? The next verse proceeds to explain its greatness.

لَيۡلَةُ الۡقَدۡرِ خَيۡرٌ مِّنۡ اَلۡفِ شَهۡرٍ

LAYLATUL QADRI KHAYRUM MIN 'ALFI SHAHR.

"The Night of Power is better than a thousand months".

The true meaning here is that the reward for spending this night in worship is better and greater than having spent one thousand months in worship.

تَنَزَّلُ ٱلۡمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَالرُّوۡحُ فِيۡهَا بِاِذۡنِ رَبِّهِمۡ مِّنۡ كُلِّ اَمۡرٍ

TANAZZALUL MALĀ'IKATU WAR RŪḤU FĪHĀ BI'IDHNI RABBIHIM MIN KULLI'AMR.

"Therein come down Angels and the Spirit, by Allah's permission, on every errand".

An exegesis that has been given for this verse, explains that when man first appeared on earth, *Mala'ikah* looked upon him with concern. They even ventured to ask Allah ﷻ *"Will You place on this earth, one who shall be riotous therein and shed blood?"*

Similarly, it can be noted that man's original form as a mere drop of sperm looked upon with dislike, so much so, that it is considered as something which pollutes clothes and must be washed away. But later,

when Allah ﷻ makes that same sperm into the form of a child, it becomes something to love and cherish. So far have things now progressed that, when on this Night of Power we find, that same man worshiping Allah ﷻ and adorning Him, then those very Angels descend towards him, obviously repentant for the thoughts they had once harbored against him. In this verse, where it is mentioned (War-ruhu) *"and the Spirit...."*, the reference is to Jibra'il ﷺ who descends to the earth during this night. Commentators of the *Qur'an* have given various meanings of this word.

The vast majority of commentators have agreed that Jibra'il ﷺ is meant here and, and most agree that, this is the most correct meaning. Allah ﷻ first makes mention of the *Mala'ikah* and then because of Jibra'il ﷺ special status among them, a separate mention is made of him.

سَلٰمٌ هِيَ حَتّٰى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ

SALĀMUN HIYA ḤATTA MAṬLA-'IL FAJR.

"Peace reigns until the break of dawn".

Indeed this night is the very embodiment of peace; through out its span, the *'Mala'ikah'* offer salutations to the faithful believers adorning their *Rabb*. As one group ascends, another group descends (with the same greetings), as indicated in some narrations. Another interpretation is that it is a night of complete safety from evil and mischief.

DU`A WHEN IN SEARCH OF LAYLATUL QADR

It is reported from Ayesha ؓ: *"I said: "O Rasulullah ﷺ, when I find myself in Laylatul Qadr, what shall I say?"* Rasulullah ﷺ replied: 'say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ كَرِيْمٌ رَّحِيْمٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّيْ

ALLĀHUMMA INNAKA `AFŪWWUN KARĪMUR RAḤĪMUN TUḤIBBUL `AFWA FA`FU `ANNĪ.

"O Allah, You are the best Forgiver, Beneficent and Merciful; You love forgiveness so forgive me".

VIRTUES OF FASTING

1. The Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said : "*The fragrance of themouth of a fasting person is more pleasant to Allah* سبحانه وتعالى *than the smell of musk."*
2. Sahl bin Saad رضي الله عنه reported that Rasulullah ﷺ said: "*In Paradise there are eight doors of which there is a door named Rayyaan. None but those that fast will enter it.*"
3. Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه reported that Rasulullah ﷺ said: "*Whoever breaks a fast on one day of Ramadhan without excuse or illness, his fasting of his whole age (life) will not compensate it.*"
4. Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said "*Whoever fasts during Ramadhan with faith and is hopeful of reward, all his past sins will be forgiven, and whoever stands up insalaah with faith and is hopeful of reward, all his past sins will be forgiven, and whoever stands up in salaah during the blessed night with faith and is hopeful of reward, all his past sins will be forgiven."*

GENERAL SUNAN DURING RAMADHAN

- Partake of *Suhur* or predawn meals.
- To end fast immediately after sunset.
- To read *Tarawih salaah* at night.

- To feed the poor and hungry.
- To increase the reading of the Holy Qur'an.
- To observe I'tikaf within the Masjid during the last ten days of Ramadhan.

FASTING TEACHES SYMPATHY FOR THE HUNGRY

Fasting is the only method whereby the pangs of hunger, the ever present companion of the poor, are experienced by the rich. Thus this experience kindles a spirit of kindness to the poor and distressed. It also gives rise to the thought of how people will fare on the day of resurrection, when the greatest urge of hunger and thirst will be felt.

FASTING OF CHILDREN

1. When young children become capable of fasting (normally, 7+ years) they should be 'encouraged' with love and affection to fast. Remember that there is no *Qadha* if the child breaks the fast.
2. By the age of ten, children should be ordered to fast. This is the normal rule; parents should use their discretion taking into account the child's health & strength.

MAKE A TIMETABLE FOR RAMADHAN

In order to maximize our time and perform our Ibadah with ease, we should try to follow a set routine or timetable.

1. We must wake up for *Suhur*, as it is a *Sunnah* of our beloved prophet ﷺ. He has informed us that the food of *Suhur* is full of *Barakah*: *"Eat Suhur, because in it lie great blessings"*. We should arrange our time for *suhur* in such a way that we are also able to perform at least 4-8 *rak'at* of *tahajjud* with *du'a* for about 15

minutes or more Rasulullah ﷺ has said that the *du'a* in the darkness of the night (after tahajjud) is readily accepted by Allah.

2. The ideal way is to wake up early and perform *tahajjud* and make *du'a* before *Suhur*. Everyone in the house should wake up and engage in *Ibadah* in the darkness and isolation of their own rooms. Shed tears and ask Allah ﷾ for your needs just as a small child cries and gets his needs fulfilled. Rasulullah ﷺ has encouraged his followers to cry when making *du'a*.

NOTE: Crying and weeping attracts mercy. Just as a mother who upon seeing her child crying for a sweet, will succumb to the child's crying and treat him with mercy, similarly when one sheds tears whilst beseeching his Lord, the Mercy of Allah ﷾ will enshroud him.

3. After *Tahajjud* and *Suhur*, we must pray our Fajr *salaah* with the congregation. Ladies should also perform their obligatory *salaah*.
4. After Fajr, remain engaged in *'Ibadah* until 15-20 minutes after sunrise and perform 4 rak'aat *Ishraq*.
5. Before *Zawaal,* perform *Salaatud-Dhuha*. Rasulullah ﷺ said, *"There is charity to give on each joint of all of you in the morning. To say Subhanallah once is charity, to say Alhamdulillah is also charity, to say La ilaha illallah is also charity, to command good and forbid evil is also charity, and two rak'aat at the time of Dhuha (chaasht) is sufficient for all these charities."*
6. Perform *Zuhr* with congregation. If possible, engage in *ibadah* for a while, then have a short rest with the intention of *Qaylulah* (siesta) a *Sunnah* of our beloved Nabi ﷺ
7. Perform 'Asr. The time between 'Asr and Maghrib is very valuable especially for du'a. We make the effort to perform our 'Asr with congregation and then remain in the masjid until Maghrib. Unfortunately, one *Nafs* was deceived us such that many of us cannot do without food in the masjid at the time of Iftar. We should try to change our habits and keep the *Akhirah* in our minds. One *Nafs* will take us home for some food; which in reality should

only take a few minutes and, will not let us come to the masjid until just before Maghrib. This is the best part of the day, which we do not value, only because of our desire for food Rasulullah ﷺ said, *"There are three groups of people whose du'a is not rejected; the fasting person until he breaks his fast..."* When Allah ﷻ has made a promise through His Nabi ﷺ there is no doubt in the acceptance of these supplications. In spite of this, we find some people whose prayers are not answered. This does not mean their prayers have been rejected. It is Allah's ﷻ favour upon us that, should He consider the granting of a request to be in our interest, he grants, otherwise withholds.

Another point to remember is that there are certain conditions in the absence of which they may be rejected. Among these is halal food and the making of *du'a* with attention and concentration. If our hearts and minds are not in the *du'a*, then they may not be answered. We must make the habit of bringing a few dates with us at time of 'Asr and thereafter engage in *dhikr, Tilawah, tasbih, etc. until* just 15-20 minutes before Maghrib when we should raise our hands in *du'a* until *Azan*. In this way, everyone will be engrossed in their own *ibadah* and if some individuals are crying, others will also derive inclination to do so. This time between 'Asr and Maghrib must be valued and do not waste it worrying about food. The saintly people are such that never mind food, not even gold, silver, or money, will distract them. Their concentration in their *du'a* is not affected, whereas, we would not even be able to concentrate if even a small morsel were to be placed in front of us. Sisters should try not to spend all their time between 'Asr and Maghrib in the kitchen.

8. After performing Maghrib, we should perform 4 *raka'at* of *Awwabin* after the two *raka'at sunnah* and two *raka'at nafl* of Maghrib. However, those who do not feel inclined to do this,

some *Ulama* state that the two *raka'at sunnah* and two *raka'at nafl* of Maghrib may also become part of 4 *raka'at Awwabin*. Hence, performing only two *raka'at* after the *sunnah* and *nafl* of Maghrib will suffice.

9. There is plenty of time between Maghrib and Isha. After food, we should sit with the household together and read from reliable books;
10. Thereafter return to the Masjid and engage yourself in *Ibadah*. Take great care not to get involved in any worldly talk. It is very upsetting and disheartening to see people wasting their time in futile talk in the masjid even during this blessed month of *Ramadhan*. Try to restrain yourself from futile talks and remain engaged in *Ibadah* until *Isha*. Our sisters should note that 20 *rak'at tarawih* is *Sunnat-Mu'akkadah* for them too. They must perform *tarawih* after Isha.
11. After *tarawih*, go straight home. Do not loiter around outside the masjid wasting time. At home, remain in *'Ibadah* until you go to sleep. Sleep with intention of waking up for *tahajjud* and *suhur*.

ALLAH'S BLESSINGS, MERCY AND FORGIVENESS

From a *Hadith*, we deduce that in this blessed month of *Ramadhan*, Allah سبحانه وتعالى makes the acquiring of *Jannah* and deliverance from the fire of *Jahannam* easy. This is the month of blessing, mercy and forgiveness.

Each minute and second of *Ramadhan* sees mercies and blessings from Allah سبحانه وتعالى descending upon us; hundreds and thousands of people are forgiven and are honoured with freedom from *Jahannam*.

We can thus conclude that to gain Allah's سبحانه وتعالى Pleasure, save oneself from *Jahannam* and gain entry into *Jannah* (which should be the desire, ambition and objective of every Muslim), there is no better time than the month of *Ramadhan*.

All that is required to reap the fruits of this month is to create in our

hearts the desire, ambition, devotion, zeal, eagerness; and that we exert effort to acquire the pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

SPENDING TIME IN DEVOTION

We should value this month and keep away from all things which incur the displeasure of Allah ﷻ. After saving ourselves from disobedience we should try to spend as much time as possible in *Ibadah* i.e. *dhikr, tasbih, nafl salaah, tilawah*, etc. If you have any *Qadha salaah,* then spend your time completing them. Make intention of *I'tikaf* every time you enter the masjid. We need to spend our time in good deeds. Therefore, whilst saving ourselves from sins we must make every possible effort to devote every precious second of *Ramadhan* in devotion to Allah ﷻ.

SOME DIRECTIVES

With a combination of all these qualities within us: we should come to the Court of our Lord and Creator with intention of acquiring His Pleasure and placing ourselves in prostration; shed tears and ask for forgiveness. *Insha-Allah*, we have complete faith that we will be honoured with forgiveness very quickly.

With this in mind, and through noble teachings of the pious in the light of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, there are certain guidelines which, if followed correctly, will make this month of *Ramadhan* fruitful for us. All these precious moments will benefit us in both this world and the next.

DECEPTION OF NAFS

For example, a person might have spent his day performing all his Fardh *salaah*, Fasting and *Tilawah* of the *Quran*, but at the same time he

involves himself in backbiting, looking at non-mahram women and various other sins. At the end of the day, when he reflects on his day, he will consider his day successful because he will only see the virtuous acts. His *Nafs* will make sure he overlooks sins he has committed. This is how *Nafs* deceives us. It lets us perform a few good deeds but at the same time involve us in committing various other sins. We are misled into being satisfied with performance of the few good deeds while we forget the sins.

SINS

We must take utmost care not to commit a single sin - major or minor - under any circumstances during the month of *Ramadhan*. Our greed *Nafs* are our arch enemies who work to mislead us. A critical look at our lives will uncover that we are normally only aware of the good deeds which we have performed; we tend to conveniently overlook the bad deeds and not so good acts.

If a person was to sit down at the end of the day to evaluate whether he has spent his day doing good or bad deeds, generally he will only dwell upon the good acts performed such as *Salaah, Tilawah, Tasbih* etc... In other words, he will only consider the deeds that he was expected to perform and see whether he has performed them. This in turn will decide if his day has been spent in disobedience to Allah ﷻ. The same person will never ponder over the deeds that he was supposed to refrain from, such as watching TV, backbiting, looking at non-mahram persons, etc. Such things that he is expected to avoid are never taken into account.

CONSEQUENCE OF SINNING

Sadly, this is often our state in the month of *Ramadhan* too. It is deduced from a *Hadith* of Rasulullah ﷺ that when one spends the day

or night in *Ibadah* but also commits sins during this time, then these devotions will go unrewarded. Rasulullah ﷺ had said, *"Many of those who fast, obtain nothing through such fasting except hunger, and many perform salaah by night but obtains nothing by it, except the discomfort of staying awake."*

From this *Hadith* we can deduce that although we may fast all day; we gain nothing because we do not stay away from evil and sin whilst in this state. Similarly is the result, if one spends the night in *Ibadah* but fails to refrain from sins (such as lying, backbiting, missing Fajr *salaah*, etc.)

TELEVISION, MOVIES, INTERNET ETC...

In *Ramadhan*, if we look around us we find many homes in which TV's and videos continue to be switched on. We are all aware of the harmful effects of TV and yet in the blessed month of *Ramadhan*; when the Mercy of Allah ﷿ descends upon earth like heavy rain, this evil television remains switched on!

During heavy rain, a person will get soaked wet even if he only walks for a few yards in the open. Similarly, the Mercy of Allah ﷿ descends upon us, if we but take a few steps towards acquiring this Mercy. However, anyone who views TV in his home is depriving his household of this limitless Mercy.

TV and video act as barriers preventing the Rahmah (mercy) of Allah ﷿ cascading upon our homes and inhabitants. Our humble plea is for you to make a firm decision to remove TV and video from your homes totally.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SADAQATUL-FITR

Fitr means to break fast or to refrain from fasting. Hence the *Eid* after

the fasts of *Ramadhan* is called *Eid-ul-Fitr*, as it is the day of rejoicing after the completion of fasting. On this occasion of happiness, as a sign of gratitude one has to give a specific amount in alms, which is called *Sadaqatul-Fitr*. To purify and obtain complete blessings for the fasts of *Ramadhan Mubarak* one has to give *Sadaqatul-Fitr*. It is reported from Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه that Rasulullah ﷺ made charity of *Fitr* compulsory as a purification of fasts from useless talks and vain discourses and also as food for the poor . Thus it is *wajib* to give *Sadaqatul-Fitr* to purify one's fast.

Another objective in giving *Sadaqatul-Fitr* on this happy occasion is also to assist the poor and needy, so that they may rejoice with the more fortunate. Once Rasulullah ﷺ sent a proclaimer through the streets of *Madinah* to proclaim, *"Beware, charity of Fitr is wajib on every Muslim, male or female, free or slave, young or old - two 'mudds' (measures) of wheat, or its equivalent, or one Sa'a' (measure) from food crops"*. To distribute a specific amount of money, barley, dates etc, on the day of *Eid-ul-Fitr* is *Wajib*. This giving of alms to the poor and needy on this auspicious day is called *Sadaqatul-Fitr.* Rasulullah ﷺ instructed the giving of *Sadaqatul-Fitr*, in the same year (2A.H.). Fasting in *Ramadhan* was made compulsory.

The reasons for giving *Sadaqatul-Fitr* are :-

1. To give *Sadaqatul-Fitr* in lieu of the acceptance of one's fasting.
2. To thank Allah سبحانه وتعالى for bestowing on us the strength to fast during the month of *Ramadhan*.
3. To purify one's fast and obtain the complete blessings of fasting.
4. To celebrate the completion of fasting.
5. To demonstrate greatness of the day of *Eid*.
6. To assist the poor in joining the atmosphere of *Eid*.

Sadaqatul Fitr is compulsory which becomes payable on the occasion of *Eid-ul-Fitr*. If one did not do so - it remains due no matter how much time passes after *Eid*.

RULES OF SADAQATUL-FITR

Sadaqatul-Fitr (or Fitrah) is *wajib* (compulsory) upon all Muslims - men, women and children who on the day of *Eid-ul-Fitr* are owners of the *Nisab of Zakaah*.

Fitrah becomes *wajib* when the day of *Fitr* dawns with the commencement of Fajr. Therefore, if someone died before entry of Fajr on the day of *Eid, Fitrah* will not be paid out of his (the deceased's) estate, since this *Fitrah* is not *wajib* on him. And, if a child is born before the rising of Fajr, *Fitrah* will be paid on his behalf. If the child is born after the entry of Fajr (on the day of Eid), *Fitrah* is not *wajib* on his behalf. The father has to pay the *Fitrah* on behalf of his under age children, i.e. those who have not attained the age of puberty. It is not obligatory upon the husband to pay *Fitrah* on behalf of his wife. If she is the owner of *Nisaab*, she shall have to pay her own *Fitrah*.

The *Fitrah* should preferably be paid before the *Eid salaah*. It is not permissible to delay the payment of *Fitrah* later than the day of *Eid*. However, if it was not paid on the day of *Eid* or before, the obligation remains and the *Fitrah* will have to be paid. It is permissible to pay the *Fitrah* in advance at any time during the month of *Ramadhan*. The *Fitrah* could be paid even before *Ramadhan*. *Sadaqatul-Fitr* is *wajib* upon all those who fasted as well as those who did not fast for some reason or other.

EID-UL-FITR

THE NIGHTS OF THE TWO EIDS

Rasulullah ﷺ said: *"The heart of a person who remains awake (in Ibadah) during the night of Eidul Fitr and Eidul Adha (these are the nights that precede Eid) will not die on the Day when hearts will be dead, i.e. the Day of Qiyamah"*.

The nights of both *Eids*, i.e. the nights preceding the Days of *Eid*, are auspicious occassions which should be observed with reverence and worship. Rasulullah ﷺ said that these nights are great occasions of *Ibadah* and of gaining the proximity and special Mercy of Allah ﷾. These blessed nights, should therefore not be allowed to pass by in idleness. Full advantage should be taken of these opportunities by offering obedience and *Ibadah* unto Allah ﷾ to the best of our abilities. *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness for sins), *Tilawah* (reciting the *Qur'an*), *Nafl salaah, durud*, etc. should be profusely offered on these blessed nights. Among the rewards which will be obtained as a result of observing the sanctity of these glorious *Eid* Nights, the greatest reward is the tiding conveyed to us by Rasulullah ﷺ. In the above mentioned *Hadith*, the heart will not be overawed with terror and fear on the Day of *Qiyamah* when the upheavals of the day will be so fearsome that men will appear to be intoxicated.

THE EID TAKBIR

On the Days of *Eid* the *Takbir* should not be recited aloud at the place where the *Eid salaah* is to be performed. To recite the *Takbir* aloud at the *Musalla (Eid Gah)* or the Masjid on the Days of *Eid* is a common practice. However, this practice is not appropriate nor correct. Everyone should engage themselves in *Dhikr* and *Takbir* silently.

THE ETIQUETTES OF EID-UL-FITR

The day of *Eid* is not merely a festive occasion. A Muslim acquires great rewards from and draws close to Allah ﷾ if he spends the day of *Eid* according to the teachings of *Shariah* and Rasulullah ﷺ.

THE SUNAN (plural of sunnah) OF THE DAY OF EID

1. To rise as early as possible (In fact much of this night should be spent in *Ibadah*).

2. To make *Ghusal* and use the *Miswaak*.
3. To wear one's best clothes whilst ensuring that it conforms with *Shariah* (*Sunnah* dress).
4. To apply itr.
5. To eat anything sweet (such as dates) before departing for *Eid salaah*.
6. To go to the "*Musalla*" as early as possible.
7. To give "*Sadaqatul-Fitr*" before leaving for the *Musalla*.
8. To choose a different route when returning from the *Musalla*.
9. To walk to the *Musalla*. However there is no harm in using any means of conveyance if the *Musalla* is a distance away.
10. To recite the following *Takbir* while walking to the *Musalla*:-

اَللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ اَللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ
وَاللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ اَللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ وَلِلّٰهِ الْحَمْدُ

ALLĀHU AKBAR. ALLĀHU AKBAR.
LĀ ILĀHA ILLAL-LĀHU WALLĀHU AKBAR.
ALLĀHU AKBAR WALIL-LĀHIL ḤAMD.

Allah is the Greatest; Allah is the Greatest;
There is no god but Allah Allah is the Greatest.
Allah is the Greatest and all praise is for Him.

THE MASA'IL (RULINGS) PERTAINING TO EID

1. No *Nafl Salaah* should be performed in the *Musalla* before or after *Eid Salaah*.
2. It is undesirable to perform the *Eid Salaah* in any other place besides the *Musalla* without any valid excuse.
3. It is vitally important to listen to both *Khutbah* after the *Eid Salaah*.

If for some reason the *Khutbah* is not audible, it is still necessary to remain seated till the *Khutbah* ends.

NOTE: It is sinful not to listen to the Khutbah.

4. If such an error is made in *Eid Salaah* which necessitates *Sajdah-Sahwa*, then the *Sajdah-Sahwa* could be left out to avoid confusion.

METHOD OF PERFORMING EID SALAAH

1. Make the intention: *"I am performing two Rakaats Eid Salaah which is wajib with six extra Takbir which are also wajib"*.
2. After the first *Takbir*, fold the hands and recite the *thana*.
3. Then lift the hands thrice while saying *"Allahu Akbar"*. After the first two times leave the arms loose and after the third fold them.
4. Now, Surah *Al-Fatiha* and a Surah will be recited by the *Imam* and the *Rak'ah* will be completed like in the normal *Salaah*.
5. The second *Rak'ah* will be performed similarly except that before going into *Ruku*, the hands will be lifted thrice (whilst saying *"Allahu-Akbar")* and each time they will be left loose on the sides.
6. With the 4th *Takbir*, the *Ruku* should be made.
7. The remainder of the *Salaah* should be completed like any normal *Salaah*.
8. *Du`a* should be made after the *Salaah* instead of after the *Khutbah*.

A FEW MASA'IL REGARDING EID SALAAH

1. If the *Imam* forgets to recite the extra *Takbirs* in the first *rak'ah* and if he remembers after reciting surah *Al-Fatihah*, he should recite the extra *Takbir* and repeat surah *Al-Fatihah*.
2. If a person joins the *Eid salaah* after the Imam has completed the extra *Takbirs* then he should recite the *Takbir* of *Tahrimah* and immediately, the additional *Takbirs*, dropping the hands between

the first two additional *Takbirs* and clasping them after the third, making sure that the hands are raised to the ears on each *Takbir*.

3. Since the condition of *Eid salaah* is the formation of a *jama'ah*, a person who missed *Eid salaah* is unable to perform the *salaah* on his own. There is no *Qadha* for *Eid salaah*.
4. A person who joins the *Eid salaah* after the Imam has already recited the *Eid Takbir* should recite the *Takbir* immediately upon entering the *salaah*. However, if he enters the *salaah* when the *Imam* is about to go into *Ruku* and he (the late-comer) fears that he will not be able to join the *Imam* in the *Ruku* if he stands and recites the *Takbir,* then he should instead recite the *Takbir* in the *Ruku*, and forgo the *tasbih* of the *Ruku* but, while reciting the *Takbir* in *Ruku* the hands should not be raised as is done when reciting the *Takbir* when in *Qiyam* (the standing posture of *salaah*). If the *Imam* emerges from the *Ruku* and the latecomer has not yet completed the recitation of his *Takbir* which he had missed then he should leave off the balance of the *Takbir* and join the Imam. In this case the balance of the *Takbir* which he could not complete are waived.
5. If someone missed a *Rak'ah* of the *Eid Salaah*, he should fulfil it as follows: After the *Imam* completes the *salaah*, he (the one who missed the *Rak'ah*) should rise and perform one *Raka'h* on his own, reciting *Qira'ah* (Surah *Al-Fatiha* plus a Surah) first, followed by the *Takbirs*. The rest of the *Rak'ah* is then completed as usual.

DU`A FOR EID-UL-FITR

Abdullah Ibn Masood ﵁ relates that Rasulullah's ﷺ *du`a* on both *Eid's* were

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّا نَسْئَلُكَ عِيْشَةً نَقِيَّةً وَّمِيْتَةً سَوِيَّةً وَّمَرَدَّةً غَيْرَ
مُخْزٍ وَّلَا فَاضِحٍ اَللّٰهُمَّ لَا تُهْلِكْنَا فُجَائَةً وَّلَا تَأْخُذْنَا

بَغْتَةً وَّلَا تَجْعَلْنَا عَنْ حَقٍّ وَّلَا وَصِيَّةٍ اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّا نَسْئَلُكَ

الْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنٰى وَالتُّقٰى وَالْهُدٰى وَحُسْنَ عَاقِبَةِ الْاٰخِرَةِ

وَالدُّنْيَا وَنَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنَ الشَّكِّ وَالشِّقَاقِ وَالرِّيَاءِ وَالسُّمْعَةِ

فِيْ دِيْنِنَا يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوْبِ لَا تُزِغْ لُوْبَنَا بَعْدِ اِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا

وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

ALLĀHUMMA INNĀ NAS'ALUKA `ĪSHATAN NAQIYYATAW WA MĪTATAN SAWIYYATAW WA MARADDATAN GHAYRA MUKHZIW WALĀ FĀḌIḤ. ALLĀHUMMA LĀ TUHLIKNĀ FUJĀ'ATAW WALĀ TA'KHUDHNĀ BAGHTATAW WALĀ TAJ `ALNĀ `AN ḤAQQIW WALĀ WAṢIYYAH. ALLĀHUMMA INNĀ NAS' ALUKAL `AFĀFA WAL GHINĀ WATTUQĀ WAL HUDĀ WA ḤUSNA ĀQIBATIL ĀKHIRATI WAD DUNYA WANA`ŪDHUBIKA MINASH-SHAKKI WASH-SHIQĀQI WARRIYĀ'I WAS SUM`ATI FĪ DĪNINA YĀ MUQALLIBAL QULŪBI LĀ TUZIGH QULŪBANĀ BA`DA IDH HADAYTANĀ WAHAB LANĀ MIL LADUNKA RAḤMAH. INNAKA ANTAL WAH-HĀB

O Allah, we ask you for an honorable life, and a balanced death, and a revival that is dignified and not degrading. O Allah, do not destroy us by making us disobey You and do not seize us by making us rebellious,

and do not make us turn away from the truth or orders.
O Allah, grant us chastity, wealth, piety, guidance and good reciprocation in the Hereafter and in this world.
We seek refuge in You (O Allah) from doubt, rebelliousness, pride and show in our religion.
O He Who controls hearts, do not make our hearts slip after guiding them.
Give us mercy from Your treasures.
You alone are the Bestower.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHAWWAL

Shawwal is the tenth lunar month. During the period of ignorance, *Ramadhan* was regarded as a blessed and sacred month. *Shawwal* was regarded as a cursed month of ill-omen by the Pagan Arabs. People of that time never married during *Shawwal*. A`ishah رضي الله عنها expressed contempt at the people to consider this month to be inauspicious, as she was married to Rasulullah ﷺ in this very month. The wrong beliefs of the people were clearly disproved by A`ishah رضي الله عنها by her marriage to Rasulullah ﷺ in the month of *Shawwal* which was no obstruction to her elevated position and the great love Rasulullah ﷺ had for her.

To a Muslim the first day of the month of *Shawwal*, is of very great significance, as this is the day of *Eid*. On this significant day, Allah سبحانه وتعالى showers His blessings and forgiveness on His servants who have fasted during the month of *Ramadhan*. It is related from Anas رضي الله عنه that Rasulullah ﷺ has said *"When the day of Eid comes, Allah proudly asks in the presence of the Angels regarding his fasting servants "O My Angels, what reward is there for such labourers who have fully completed their duty"*.The Angels reply *"O Rabb they should be rewarded in full"*. Then Allah سبحانه وتعالى asks the Angels, *"O My Angels, what is the reward for those male and female servants who have fulfilled My divine command which was compulsory upon them, and now they*

have come out to beseech Me in du`a? I take an oath upon My grandeur and glory, My generosity and exaltation of My elevated position, that I will definitely accept their du`as". Thereafter Allah ﷻ says to the muslims *"Disperse, I have forgiven you and replaced your sins with good deeds"*. Rasulullah ﷺ says *"they return forgiven"*.

THE SIX NAFL FASTS OF SHAWWAL

Abu Ayyub رضي الله عنه relates that Rasulullah ﷺ has said: *"Whosoever fasted the full month of Ramadhan and then follows it with six fasts of Shawwal, is like a person who has fasted the full year"* *Targhib*

In another *Hadith* it is related that by observing these six fasts after *Ramadhan* all faults and sins are forgiven. The reward of every good deed is tenfold or more.

The *thawaab* of the month of *Ramadhan* is equal to that of ten months and that of these six voluntary fast are equal to that of the remaining two months to complete the full year. These fasts could be kept continuously after *Eid* or separately during the month of *Shawwal*.

In a lengthy *Hadith*, Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ has stated:
"When Eid arrives, Allah ﷻ addresses the Mala'ikah and says 'They (Muslims) have fulfilled My order. They have emerged to make du'a. I take oath by My Splendour, by My Grandeur, by My Grace and by My Loftiness that I will most certainly accept their prayer." Allah ﷻ then proclaims to the Believers: *"Return! I have forgiven you and I have exchanged your evil deeds with virtues. They thus return from the Musalla forgiven."*

May Allah ﷻ accept our efforts and make every moment of this blessed month a means of receiving His Mercy, Blessing and Forgiveness. May we all be granted a place in *Jannah*. *....Ameen.*